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CONFERENCE TO EXAMINE EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN MILITARY

The U.S. military has had a checkered record of success in wars waged since 1945. Part of the explanation behind the failures (Vietnam, Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan) lies in the failure of military organizations to adapt to the type of wars in which they found themselves engaged.

Cultural predilection towards major combat operations has shaped the mindset of the officer corps and stifled creativity, resulting in failed approaches to conflicts that refused to conform to established norms. The armed forces of other nations have experienced similar issues, sometimes resulting in catastrophic or near-catastrophic defeats (e.g., Soviet Union in Afghanistan from 1979-1988).

Organized by **Peter R. Mansoor**, Gen. Raymond E. Mason Jr. Chair of Military History, the **Culture of Military Organizations** conference will explore the impact of the culture on the development of effective military organizations and therefore its impact on security from 1861 to the present. It will take place Friday, September 29, through Saturday, September 30, at the Mershon Center for International Security Studies, 1501 Neil Ave.


The effectiveness of military organizations is dependent on a number of components, among them organization, doctrine, training, weapons technology, leadership, morale, discipline and cohesion, endurance, and the ability to adapt to volatile and uncertain combat environments. Underlying these factors is organizational culture, a vital wellspring of the effectiveness of armies, navies, and air forces throughout history.

Culture, commonly defined as the behaviors and beliefs characteristic of a group, is the driving force behind how military organizations think about future war and therefore of how they prepare their members to embark on its conduct.

The Culture of Military Organizations conference will explore the impact of organizational culture on the U.S. Civil War, the British, German and Indian armies, the Red Army and Imperial Japanese Army, Israeli Defense Forces, Iraq Army Maritime Forces, U.S. Army and Marine Corps, and Aerospace forces.

Participants include:

- Robert Farley, University of Kentucky
- Mark Grimsley, The Ohio State University
- David Hunter-Chester, Intelligent Decision Systems, Inc.
- David Kilcullen, Caerus Associates
- John T. Kuehn, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College
- Daniel Marston, Australian National University
- Allan Millett, The Ohio State University
- Brig. Gen. William Mullen III, USMC
- Williamson Murray, The Ohio State University
- Reina Pennington, Norwich University
- Wayne Shieh, U.S. Naval Academy
- Richard Hart Sinnreich, Independent Scholar
- David Stubbs, Independent Scholar
- Gil-Ii Vardi, Stanford University



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Corbin Williamson, Air University

- Jorit Wintjes, Universität Würzburg
- Leonard Wong, Strategic Studies Institute
- Kevin Woods, Institute for Defense Analyses

This is a working conference designed to produce an edited volume that serves military officers, national security policy makers, military historians, political scientists, sociologists, and others interested in how military organizational culture impacts the use of force and security in the world throughout history and today. The edited volume will also be of value in the curricula of professional military educational organizations, such as the service and national war colleges.

This project is modeled after the other two Mershon projects for which Mansoor has been the principal investigator, both of which resulted in edited volumes produced by Cambridge University Press (*Hybrid Warfare*, 2012, and *Grand Strategy and Military Alliances*, 2016).

If you have any questions about this event, please contact Steven Blalock at blalock.33@osu.edu.

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